



Public Service Commission of Wisconsin

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For Immediate Release – June 13, 2005
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PSC Helps Improve Wireless Emergency Telephone Service

Seeks Comment on Reimbursement Applications

MADISON – The Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSC) encourages public comment on applications from counties and wireless providers that are taking a step to enhance the quality of emergency services for cell phone users that dial 911. Wireless Enhanced 911 is an upgrade to the current system and will allow 911 operators to pinpoint the exact location where wireless calls are made.

“Wireless 911 will allow emergency personnel to respond within minutes to a cell phone call,” said Chairperson Daniel Ebert. “Implementing this system will improve public safety in Wisconsin and will provide a measure of security for all wireless customers.”

Without this technology, 911 operators must obtain the location of an emergency caller verbally. In many instances, callers cannot give their exact location because they are either too sick or they simply do not know their exact location. There have been countless cases where lives could have been saved if wireless 911 with automatic location identification would have been implemented. Examples of these circumstances range from car accidents in remote areas or on highways without major intersections to reference, assaults and abductions, people being stranded in blizzard-like conditions to locating callers with false threats.

In August 2004, the Wisconsin Legislature passed and Governor Jim Doyle signed legislation establishing a three year grant program which will help Wisconsin communities cover costs to implement wireless 911 and respond more effectively to emergency calls from wireless callers. The PSC will manage how to reimburse the 68 counties and nine wireless providers who applied for funds.

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Last fall the Commission adopted rules to address which costs are eligible for reimbursement to local governments and wireless providers. The applications for reimbursement that counties and providers submitted this spring total \$104 Million. Once total authorized costs for the program are determined, a uniform monthly surcharge will be set for wireless customers. These charges will appear in late fall and will sunset in three years.

Communities that have already implemented the technology also qualify for reimbursement. The two that have already done so in Wisconsin include Waukesha and Fond du Lac counties.

As part of its review, the PSC is asking for public comment on the grant applications pending before the Commission. **All comments are due to the PSC by noon on June 27, 2005.** County and provider comments must be filed using the PSC's Electronic Regulatory Filing System (ERF) on the PSC website at: <http://psc.wi.gov>. Members of the public, interested in providing comments, can do so using the ERF system, by mailing the PSC or visiting our website and clicking on public comments. Please include docket number 05-TR-104 on all correspondence.

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The documents associated with this application, including the county and provider applications, can be viewed on our Electronic Regulatory Filing System at <http://psc.wi.gov>. Click on ERF System, select Search Document Repository and enter docket #05-TR-104.

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